



Facing the Facts

Hispanic Youth and Violence

ASPIRA Institute for Policy Research

Homicides

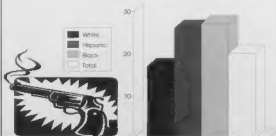
Homicide rates for young Hispanic males are four to five times higher than those of non-Hispanic white males. Homicide is the second leading cause of death all young people aged 15-24 (William L. Roper, MD, Center for Disease Control, 1990).

Weapons

According to the Centers for Disease Control Youth Risk Behavior, Survey in 1990, 26 % of Hispanic and 27% of black students compared to 17 % of white high school students said they had carried a weapon in the past month. Forty-one percent of Hispanic males and 12 percent of Hispanic females said they had carried a weapon (Juveniles and Violence: Juveniles Offending and Victimization, OJJDP July 1993).

A national survey of teachers and students found that Hispanics were more likely to carry a weapon to school than blacks or whites. Twenty-two percent of Hispanics, 11% of blacks and 11% of whites reported that they had possessed a weapon on school grounds (Metropolitan Life Survey of the American Teacher, 1992).

Percent of students who say they carried a weapon in the last month



Source: Juveniles and Violence, OJJDP, July 1993
(Numbers are in percentages)

Crime Victims

Hispanics are 20% more likely to be crime victims than non-Hispanics, with a crime victimization rate of 36 per 1,000 persons (Highlights from 20 Years of Surveying Crime Victims, U.S. Department of Justice, Bureau of Justice Statistics, October 1993).

Youth between 16-19 have the greatest chance of being crime victims of any age group. Ninety-one youth per 1,000 persons were victims of violent crime in 1992 (Highlights from 20 Years of Surveying Crime Victims, U.S. Department of Justice, Bureau of Justice Statistics, October 1993).



The lower a family's income, the greater their chance of being victimized by violent crime. For example, families with incomes above \$50,000 reported crime victimization rates of 20 per 1,000 persons, while families with incomes below \$7,500 reported rates of 59 per 1,000 persons (Highlights from 20 Years of Surveying Crime Victims, U.S. Department of Justice, Bureau of Justice Statistics, October 1993).

Two-thirds (62%) of Hispanic crime victims under 21 are victimized by other youth under 21 (Hispanic Victims, OJPBJS-Bureau of Justice, 1990 Statistics, Special Report, 1990).

School Safety

More Hispanics and blacks say they feel unsafe in school than whites. Fifteen percent of Hispanic students felt they were not very safe or not safe at all (Metropolitan Life Survey of the American Teacher, 1992).

Blacks and Hispanics are more likely to be victims of violent acts at school. Fifteen percent of 12th grade, 18 percent of 10th grade and 22 percent of 8th grade Hispanic students reported being threatened with a weapon (National Education Goals Report, U.S. Government Printing Office, 1993). Over one third (35 percent) of all students said other students in their school belong to fighting

Students reporting being threatened with a weapon

	8th Grade	10th Grade	12th Grade
Hispanic	22%	18%	15%
Black	24%	20%	19%
White	17%	15%	13%

Source: National Education Goals Report, U.S. Government Printing Office, 1993

gangs. In schools with a student population of 1,000 or more the percentage jumped to 47 percent. In urban schools the percentage was 43 percent. Over half (51 percent) of Hispanics, 42% of blacks and 31% of whites reported the presence of gangs in their schools (National Education Goals Report, U.S. Government Printing Office, 1993).

Who are the violent offenders?

The majority of chronic juvenile offenders begin their criminal career before they turn 12 years of age (A Comprehensive Strategy for Serious, Violent, and Chronic Juvenile Offenders, OJJDP, July 1993).

The Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention reports five characteristics of chronic violent offenders. Offenders are:

- Less attached to and less monitored by their parents,

- Less committed to school and less attached to teachers,
- More likely to have delinquent peers,
- More apt to be gang members, and
- More likely to reside in poor, high-crime-rate areas

(A Comprehensive Strategy for Serious, Violent, and Chronic Juvenile Offenders, July 1993).

Drug and Alcohol Connection

Over seven percent of all rape cases, nine percent of robberies, and five percent of assaults were committed by offenders who were under the influence of drugs (Criminal Victimization in the U.S., U.S. Department of Justice, Bureau of Justice Statistics, 1990).

Over seventeen percent of Hispanic youth between 12-17 said they used illicit drugs at least once. Twelve percent said they had used drugs in the past year and another 7.5% said they used drugs in the past month (National Household Survey on Drug Abuse, 1992).

Over 16% of Hispanic youth between 12-17 reported they drank alcohol in the past month, while another 30.6% drank alcohol in the past year and 36.8% had drunk alcohol at least once (National Household Survey on Drug Abuse, 1992).

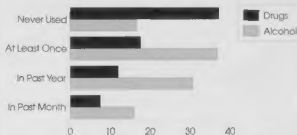
Community Intervention

The Justice Department's Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention has identified five key principles for preventing and reducing juvenile delinquency. They are:

- Strengthening families,
- Supporting core social institutions (schools, religious institutions, and community organizations),
- Promoting prevention strategies and programs,
- Intervening immediately and effectively when delinquent behavior occurs, and
- Identifying and controlling the small percentage of serious, violent, and chronic juvenile offenders

(A Comprehensive Strategy for Serious, Violent, and Chronic Juvenile Offenders, OJJDP, July 1993).

Hispanic youth (12-17) who used drugs or alcohol



Source: National Household Survey on Drugs and Alcohol, 1992
(Numbers are in percentages)

A 1990 forum on Youth Violence in Minority Communities suggested several components for effective community prevention programs, including:

- A strong link among agencies that provide a wide range of services to create a more comprehensive support system for violence prevention activities. The agencies can plan violence prevention activities with the community and share resources;
- Media and communities working together to promote public awareness of the need for violence prevention and publicize existing violence prevention strategies;
- Technical assistance and training systems to give professionals and community people skills and training to promote and support violence reduction activities;
- Mentor programs in the community that involve male and female role models and include exposure to family, career, and recreational situations that foster empowerment, life skills training, and conflict resolution;
- Recreational, social, cultural, and training programs that increase opportunities for both boys and girls to explore socially acceptable and healthy options;

-Job opportunities for youth that will contribute to productive futures to build knowledge and practical skills, self-esteem, and positive attitudes (Forum on Youth Violence in Minority Communities: Setting the Agenda for Prevention, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, 1991).

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This publication was produced by Miguel Bonilla and Elizabeth Weiser Ramirez of the ASPIRA Institute for Policy Research, which receives core funding from the Anheuser-Busch Companies. The ASPIRA Association, Inc. is a national organization that promotes education improvement and leadership development for Puerto Rican/Latino youth. ASPIRA has offices in Connecticut, Florida, Illinois, New Jersey, New York, Pennsylvania, and Puerto Rico, with its National Office and Institute for Policy Research at 1112 16th St., NW, Suite 340, Washington, DC 20036.